

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: Original
POSITION: Neutral, note concerns

BILL NUMBER: SB 286
AUTHOR: S. Aanestad
RELATED BILLS: AB 2770 (La Malfa, 2008)

BILL SUMMARY: Dept. of Fish & Game: Scientific Collector's Permits

Existing law authorizes the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to issue permits to individuals to take or possess plants and animals for scientific or educational purposes. This bill would authorize the DFG to issue a group permit to qualifying organizations, such as zoos and aquariums, in the name of a principal scientific investigator of the entity or in the name of the entity. Temporary employees or volunteers would be eligible to work under the permit subject to DFG approval if adequately supervised.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Individual permits can be obtained through an existing program at a cost of about \$60. Not including enforcement and follow-up, it costs the DFG about \$300 to issue a permit. The DFG issues about 1,800 permits annually which results in permit issuance costs not covered by permit fees of about \$432,000. To recover the full cost of issuing group permits, the bill would authorize the DFG to charge more than \$60 for a group permit if it determines that the cost of issuing those permits exceeds the cost of issuing an individual permit. The DFG would also be authorized to charge a fee for any amendments to a group permit.

The DFG reports a need of eight positions and \$945,000 in the first year and \$780,000 ongoing to implement the group permit program. However, it is unclear how the proposed change to allow the use of group permits would increase workload for the program, particularly since it is uncertain how many group permit applications would be submitted. We note that any requests for additional resources would be evaluated during the budget development process.

COMMENTS

Finance is neutral on this bill because it would reduce the burden on qualifying organizations to receive permission for temporary employees or volunteers to work with plants or animals taken or possessed for scientific or educational purposes. However, we do note the following concerns:

- The bill does not include a definition of a 'temporary employee'. Consequently, businesses that purchase 50 permits through the existing process might purchase one group permit to cover all 50 employees even though the temporary status of those employees could be questionable.
- The bill would only authorize the DFG to charge a fee sufficient to recover permit issuance costs. It does not authorize the DFG to charge a fee sufficient to also recover enforcement and follow up costs.

The DFG would be authorized to charge a fee for the full cost of issuing a group permit and any amendments to the permit. Consequently, it is unclear to what extent the group permit would be utilized because the existing program caps the fee at a level below actual costs.

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Analyst/Principal (0634) M. Almy	Date	Program Budget Manager Karen Finn	Date
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Department Deputy Director	Date
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Governor's Office:	By:	Date:	Position Approved _____
			Position Disapproved _____

BILL ANALYSIS Form DF-43 (Rev 03/95 Buff)

BILL ANALYSIS/ENROLLED BILL REPORT--(CONTINUED)**Form DF-43****AUTHOR****AMENDMENT DATE****BILL NUMBER**

S. Aanestad

Original

SB 286

COMMENTS (continued)

We note that this bill is identical to AB 2770 (La Malfa, 2008), which was vetoed by the Governor due to the delay in passing the 2008-09 Budget.

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)							
	LA	(Dollars in Thousands)							
	CO	PROP							Fund
	RV	98	FC	2008-2009	FC	2009-2010	FC	2010-2011	Code
3600/Dept FishGam	SO	No	-----	See Fiscal Summary				-----	0001